Standing on a Glass Cliff?: A Case Study of FIFA's Gender Initiatives

Na Young Ahn[a*] and George B. Cunningham[a]

[a]Department of Health and Kinesiology, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, USA

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The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) has taken gender equality[i] initiatives by inaugurating a female leadership development programme (FLDP)[ii] as well as appointing women[iii] in leadership positions. As such, the authors draw a new theoretical notion glass cliff (Ryan & Haslam, 2005, 2007) to explore why FIFA started FLDP and assigned women to leadership ranks. Based on semi-structured interviews with 16 women who accomplished FLDP, there was no direct evidence as yet to support the glass cliff phenomenon in FIFA's gender-related actions. Although the results are inconclusive, there was some evidence showing that FIFA's gender initiatives emerged during their reforming processes in 2015. Specifically, participants responded that FIFA's historic appointments of women to leadership positions after the corruption and the continuance of the women's leadership development program are concerned with the glass cliff effect, as women have never been sought as leaders in football governance. Lastly, the authors addressed practical and theoretical implications and future directions for women's leadership in sport management scholarship.

Keywords: glass cliff, FIFA, FLDP, football governance, leadership

1. Introduction

Despite representing nearly half of the global workforce (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2018), women are underrepresented in leadership roles (Powell, 2018). Among *Fortune* 500 companies, women occupy 25% of senior level positions and just 5% of the top executive roles (Catalyst, 2018). The figures do not improve appreciably in the sport setting. Adriaanse (2016) found that women occupy less than 20% of leadership positions in international sport governing bodies, and Ahn and Cunningham (2017) observed similar figures in their analysis of National Olympic Committees (NOCs). Considering the increasing number of women working in the sport setting, the lack of access is meaningful on a number of fronts. As LaVoi (2016) explained, the presence of women in key leadership roles is important for a

number of reasons. Specifically, women: serve as role models; offer support and advocacy for other women; help grow the number of women in other leadership capacities; advocate for fairness and equality; and are less likely than men to engage in abusive behaviors. Furthermore, the presence of women is associated with a number of group and organizational benefits, including better decision making (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Shaw & Hoeber, 2003), quality leadership (Eagly & Carli, 2003), creativity (Nielson & Huse, 2010), and more ethical business practices (Post & Byron, 2015).

Alongside this research is evidence that an increasing number of sport organizations are offering leadership programs designed to increase the number of women in such ranks. As an example of gender-based initiatives, most national and international sport governing bodies (e.g., the National Olympic Committees [NOCs], International Olympic Committee [IOC], and International Paralympic Committee [IPC]) currently aim to increase the pool of women in decision-making positions by more than 20% (Women on Boards, 2016). Of those, some sport organizations, such as the IOC, Sport Australia, Sport New Zealand, and Women's Sport Leadership Academy, have designed and offered leadership developmental programs for women. As an example, the leadership program provided by Women's Sport Leaders Academy supports girls and women to further enhance their competencies—voice to express their opinions and decision-making—and contributes to the development of leadership of the next generation of outstanding sports leaders and sport-for-development organizations. Within football governance, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) recognized that women occupy just 8% of executive members in local-level football associations (FIFA, 2015a). As a result, FIFA prioritized increasing the numbers of women in football and initiated tangible gender-related action plans (FIFA, 2015a).

One kind of these efforts is that sport organizations are responding to evidence of the value that women bring to the workplace. For example, FIFA executive board member, Moya Dodd, wrote in a *New York Times* op-ed that more women in football would result in a cultural shift for the sport, thereby allowing it to reap many benefits, "capturing new fans, new markets, and the imagination of millions of little girls" (Dodd, 2015). Another interpretation is that sport organizations are responding to various pressures, including social pressures for diversity (Cunningham, 2008; Doherty & Chelladurai, 1999) and mandates from external stakeholders (Adriaanse, 2016). In this study, we draw from glass cliff theory (Ryan & Haslam, 2005, 2007) to offer a third possibility: some sport organizations are likely to seek women for leadership roles when the organization is imperiled. From this perspective, when sport organizations are in crisis, they will seek a dramatic shift, which, given the historical dominance of men in powerful roles, frequently means seeking women to lead. The positive of such an about-face is that women then might have opportunities not otherwise afforded them. The negative outcomes could include the placement of women in precarious leadership roles, in effect setting them up for failure (Ryan & Haslam, 2005, 2007) and allowing stronger gender-stereotypic beliefs of leadership (Ryan, Haslam, & Kulich, 2010).

The purpose of this study was to further explore this possibility. Specifically, we focus on FIFA's gender-related initiatives. As outlined in the following sections, the program began near the time of the international governing body's bribery scandals. Grounding our work in glass cliff theory (Ryan & Haslam, 2005, 2007) and resultant scholarship in that area, we interviewed program participants from all around the world. Many of the women with whom we spoke suggested recent gender-based actions in times of crisis were largely associated with their rebuilding image and reputation from the recent corruption in 2015. The study participants also

pointed to an overall gender bias in football. In the following sections, we briefly overview the FIFA bribery crisis, articulate the manner in which glass cliff theory serves as an ideal lens to view FIFA's gender-based actions, and then present specific research questions that helped guide our study.

2. Background and Theoretical Framework

2.1 FIFA, Bribery, and Women's Leadership Development

In May 2015, the United States (US) Department of Justice indicted 9 FIFA officials and another 5 corporate executives on charges of racketeering, wire fraud, and money laundering, among other offenses (Department of Justice, 2015). The defendants were alleged "to have systematically paid and agreed to pay well over $150 million in bribes and kickbacks to obtain lucrative media and marketing rights to international soccer tournaments." Since the initial charges, US authorities have charged over 40 officials and corporate executives, with many pleading guilty (Laughland, 2017). The corruption charges were alongside other allegations of wrongdoing related refereeing, a World Cup host selection, and resource allocation, among others. As noted by the BBC, the allegations and imprisonments, "cast doubt over the transparency and honesty for the process of allocating the World Cup tournaments, electing its president, and the administration of funds, including those earmarked for improving football facilities in some of FIFA's poorer members" (FIFA Corruption Crisis, 2015).

Parallel to FIFA corruption charges were efforts by the governing body to engage efforts and programming to increase women's involvement in the sport. Prior to the 2015 Women's World Cup, FIFA formed a task force to develop some key areas to be focused in relation to women's football in 2014. In May 2015, as part of the efforts carried out by the task force, FIFA inaugurated a female leadership development programme (FLDP) to foster more women

administrators at middle- and senior-level managerial positions and as executive officers in member associations and confederations affiliated with FIFA (FIFA, 2014, 2015a). In addition, they appointed the first woman to serve as secretary-general and chief women's football officer in 2016 (i.e., Fatma Samoura and Sarai Bareman, respectively), shaping a historical trajectory of women involving in decision-making in football governance. Finally, since 2014, FIFA continued to organize conferences and workshops for the development of women's football and promotion of gender equality in leadership in football governance. In addition to what Joseph Blatter (a former FIFA president) used to claim, "The future of football is feminine" (FIFA, 2011), FIFA's endeavors showed how much they sought to enhance inclusive decision-making environments in football governance. As such, the FIFA case serves as a noteworthy stride towards gender balance policy in the realm of the men-led sport governance.

Despite FIFA's progressive gender-related actions, such as the implementation of the women's leadership development program, annual conferences (e.g., #FIFA4Equality), and historic appointments of women to leadership ranks, researchers have called for careful scrutiny of their schemes for a number of reasons. Some researchers have argued that the linkage between FIFA's corruption and gender equality initiatives should be revisited (for more details of FIFA's scandal, see Boudreaux, Karahan, & Coats, 2016; Fortunato, 2017) because their gender-based actions occurred in times of crisis (Edwards, 2016; Glass, 2016). Furthermore, FIFA explicitly announced the launch of several gender-related actions by spreading its positive message of gender equality across many different media platforms (Glass, 2016). According to Mason, Thibault, and Misener (2016), when representative sport governing bodies (e.g., FIFA or IOC) are involved in corrupt activities (e.g., financial rebate), they are subject to garner a wide range of the public attention worldwide. In turn, corrupt organizations promptly and desperately seek

ways to protect their image and recover from the loss of trust. From a crisis management perspective, Ibrahim (2017) similarly asserted that when their scandal was released through the media outlet, FIFA used a "denial strategy" (p. 11) for communication to rebuild their image and reputation.

2.2 Gender Bias and Leadership

Gender bias is rife across the workplace and remains significant barriers for women in attaining positions of leadership (Heilman, 2012). There are three aspects of bias that are important in addressing leadership gaps between men and women, and one of these is the gender stereotype. Stereotypes in general involve a cognitive aspect of bias—people assign gendered qualities to leadership roles—while both prejudice (e.g., attitudes, beliefs, and feelings) and discrimination (e.g., actions) represent emotional and behavioral components of bias, respectively. For example, mistaken attitudes and beliefs influence how women are treated by peers and followers at work and how they view themselves and their capabilities as a leader. Thus, gender stereotypic beliefs can lead to prejudice and discrimination towards an individual of groups of people (whether they are subjectively positive or negative) and be ultimately translated into organizational hiring and job placement decisions, as well as women's career development and advancement (Eagly & Carli, 2003).

Researchers have observed the stereotypical gender beliefs about women and men in leadership across different settings, including law (Ashby, Ryan, & Haslam, 2006), politics (Powell & Butterfield, 2011), and business (Heilman, 2012), as have sport management researchers noted such gender stereotypes and leadership dynamics (Adriaanse, 2016; Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Walker & Bopp, 2011). Schein (2001), for example, expounded on such gender stereotypes in organizational practices and leadership by presenting a

"think manager-think male" association. According to her, the typical characteristics of a successful leader align with masculine or agentic qualities; on the other hand, feminine or communal characteristics hold a weak link with leadership stereotypes. In the context of sport, Burton and colleagues (2009) examined "think athletic director, think masculine" managerial stereotypes, indicating that masculine qualities are strongly tied with the role of athletic director.

Ryan and Haslam (2005, 2007) extended the notion of "think manager-think male" to include the prescriptive gender stereotype, such as "think crisis-think female." Gartzia and colleagues (2012) supported this assertion that women are likely to be appointed to leadership positions when organizations perform poorly (e.g., financial downturn) or undergo a crisis. Women in such positions must face and negotiate negative consequences of organizations while standing on the glass cliff because they are being set up to fail and take risks. Given the precarious circumstances, the glass cliff is particularly problematic for women leaders, as they are less likely to refuse the promotions to high-level positions for a number of reasons. These include existing barriers to upward mobility, lack of alternative leadership offers, and their desire for career success (see Bruckmüller, Ryan, Rink, & Haslam, 2014, for an excellent overview). Given that gender bias and sexist discrimination create the glass cliff effect altogether in the workplace (Ryan & Haslam, 2007), the primary causes and empirical evidence of the glass cliff are addressed as follows.

According to Ryan and Haslam (2005, 2007), the glass cliff derives from manifestations of sexism in leadership roles. In professional settings, they highlighted the two elements of sexism involved in the glass cliff: hostile and benevolent sexism. Hostile sexism refers to an explicit form of sexist prejudices that foster antipathy towards women, whereas benevolent sexism endorses descriptive and prescriptive gender beliefs and attitudes in implicit ways (Glick

& Fiske, 2001). For example, drawing from a role congruity theory, people might have some gender role expectations towards women leaders to be friendly and selfless in the workplace due to their traditional gender roles as mothers, wives, and caretakers (Brown et al., 2011). However, if women in leadership exhibit opposing qualities (e.g., aggressive and assertive), they are evaluated more negatively than those women who display communal qualities in the workplace. Although each of the perspectives of sexism seems to emerge from separate bias and feelings toward women (Heilman, 2012), researchers do not attribute the glass cliff to overt sexism or subtle sexism alone (Acar & Sümer, 2018; Ryan & Haslam, 2007). Rather, empirical evidence suggests that both sexist mechanisms are highly positively correlated and concurrently lead to the glass cliff effect (Bruckmüller et al., 2014; Mulcahy & Linehan, 2014). For example, Ryan and colleagues (2011) argued that women in management are less likely to reach leadership ranks because followers and peers question their legitimacy. More recently, Acar and Sümer (2018) observed similar results that hostile attitudes towards non-conforming women leaders were evident in poorly performing organizations. Therefore, even when women crack the glass ceiling, they are still confronted with less authority in decision-making if organizations place women in the glass cliff positions without providing necessary information, resources, and support (Ryan & Haslam, 2007).

In support of the glass cliff, Bruckmüller and colleagues (2014) pointed to subtle sexism as a more relevant source of the glass cliff, claiming that dominant groups in failing organizations set a baseline preference for women as leaders to keep other fellow in-group members (e.g., men) from high-risk positions. In effect, women placed in precarious positions seem less likely to achieve outstanding performance and are left to encounter interpersonal conflicts and blame as a scapegoat rather than declining organizations' taking responsibility

(Bruckmüller & Branscombe, 2010). This is highly relevant to the current study because the majority of decision-makers in sport workplaces are men (see Cunningham, 2019), and men oftentimes establish a nuanced sexism and in-group favoritism to maintain privileges over outgroup members (Ryan & Haslam, 2007). Similarly, researchers acknowledged that women who are deliberately appointed to the glass cliff fall short of supportive networks and opportunities for their growth in upper management (Ryan et al., 2011). Thus, both in-group favoritism and discriminatory organizational practices against women form the glass cliff effect altogether in professional settings.

Furthermore, situational and contextual factors provide the second explanation for the glass cliff (Bruckmüller & Branscombe, 2010; Bruckmüller et al., 2014; Ryan et al., 2016). Unlike the traditional view of leadership, Ryan and Haslam (2007) argued that organizations under downturn circumstances tend to assign women to the upper-level positions, seeking feminine leadership characteristics (e.g., transformational and ethical styles). In other words, gender bias that associates women with relational quality and conflict-solving might yield a rationalization of leadership offers for women in times of crisis (Bruckmüller et al., 2014). According to Kulich and colleagues (2015), there is additional evidence showing that women are selected as leaders in an organization under uncontrollable circumstances instead of flourishing times. They further note that replacing masculine leadership qualities with feminine leadership qualities in struggling situations is viewed as a symbolic strategy, implying that women are not valued as a competent leader who can bring actual changes and actively handle with the crisis.

Given the increased risk of failure, however, this reasoning is discouraging since both communal and agentic leadership characteristics are essential for organizations in a crisis (Ryan et al., 2011). Moreover, although the differences in expectations towards a leader are small in the

declining workplace, the separation of leadership contexts reproduces the institutional systems

coupled with gendered policies, compositions, cultures, and ultimately, links to a "think crisis–

think female" paradigm (Ryan & Haslam, 2007). These instances become evident in the

coaching context. As successful head coaches are tied with masculine leadership qualities, head

coaches are mostly men, with a few exceptions. In explaining one of these, Wicker and

colleagues (2019) found that, women are likely to be hired as head coaches in a team with

seasons of a low winning percentage in women's collegiate football in the US, supporting the

contextual factors surrounding the glass cliff. Therefore, just as gender biases exist across work

settings, and much of gender politics occur in organizational and sociocultural systems, the

justification of leadership offers for women based on situational factors is considered a critical

catalyst of the glass cliff (Ryan et al., 2011).

2.3 The Present Study

Despite the considerable support for the glass cliff notion outside sport (e.g., law, Ryan et

al., 2011; information technology, Wilson-Kovacs, Ryan, & Haslam, 2006; politics, Ryan et al.,

2010; and higher education, Peterson, 2014), researchers have little evidence of whether women

in sport organizations encounter the glass cliff. Indeed, a few researchers have speculated that the

glass cliff is present in sport, and they have called for future examinations (see Burton, 2015;

Cunningham, 2019; Wicker et al., 2019). One area to explore the glass cliff effect is

administrative positions. For instance, poorly performing sport organizations might consider

appointing women to leadership positions to monitor corruption and help reduce such activities

(Dollar, Fisman, & Gatti, 2001; Swamy, Knack, Lee, & Azfar, 2001). According to Kihl,

Skinner, and Engelberg (2017), sport corruption (e.g., bribery, fraud, and other illegal payments)

results in significant decreases in reputations, financial status, and employee turnover of sport

organizations. As such, organizations immediately implement reform strategies after the disclosure of such corrupt activities to recover their image and performances (Mason et al., 2006).

Another area related to the present study is the coaching profession. Women might obtain a head coaching position only when teams have a history of losses or poor records in the previous years (see Cook & Glass, 2013, for a related analysis with a focus on race). This is because, although there is the growing number of women in the sport setting, men dominate decision-making positions in both women and men's teams (Cunningham, 2019). Therefore, in-group decision makers (i.e., men) might leave a risky position for women coaches by providing unfavorable leadership offers in sports teams or units with unsuccessful performance. Together, if men and women do not exert equal influence in decision-making, women in sport administration and coaching continue to face a wide array of gender bias or different treatments by contexts. Since researchers have not investigated the robustness of the glass cliff in sport, the case of FIFA's recent gender diversity initiatives after the scandal adds a significant contribution to the theory in the discourses of football and gender politics. As such, the present study applied the glass cliff notion to examine the FIFA case.

In building from the aforementioned literature, the following research questions helped guide the present study:

Research Question 1: What made FIFA promote gender-based initiatives in the decision-making processes, including FLDP?

Research Question 2: What is the linkage between the glass cliff phenomenon and FIFA's recent gender diversity initiatives in times of crisis?

Given the research questions, we provide an overview of qualitative research design (e.g., participants, procedures of data collection, and data analysis) and discuss findings of the study in the following section.

3. Method

We conducted the current study under the interpretivist paradigm, as a poststructuralist point of view involves critical explorations of how empirical data is interpreted and accounts for power dynamics in socially constructed reality (Morgan, 2007). Adopting such a critical point of view helps examine social positions of women leaders and their perceived gender norms and barriers in the football domain. Along these lines, we embraced a qualitative research approach to investigate the glass cliff phenomenon in football governance. Because the qualitative research setting is based on natural, unstandardized, and reflexive processes, researchers can gather rich data and analyze a variety of meanings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Further, the qualitative research approach is helpful when discovering a particular case and understanding individuals' personal and managerial experiences to attempt a detailed explanation of the specific phenomenon (Bluhm, Harman, Lee, & Mitchell, 2011).

To achieve the end of the study, we adopted a single case study because it allows for carrying an intrinsic and experiential consideration of generic phenomenon (Stake, 2005). Patton (1990) and Yin (1989) contended that choosing a representative case enables the greatest understanding of a particular phenomenon. Similarly, Stake (2005) suggested that the *intrinsic case study* provides "thick description" (p. 450), when researchers select an opportunistic and educational case and manifest research contexts well by interacting with the people inside and outside case. As a result, it becomes both process and product of a particular inquiry. Thus, we focused on the participants of FIFA's FLDP and co-created findings through an interaction

between investigators and participants. In particular, the participants of FIFA's FLDP are either administrators or coaching staff who were referred from their confederation or member associations to partake the program. Since these pioneering women leaders are seen as potential leaders in the uppermost echelons in football governance, we considered them as a representative case in the study. Finally, to conduct the study, we underwent the necessary processes for a human research protection program and obtained approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the affiliated university.

3.1 Participants

In order to identify the potential participants in the study, we employed a purposive sampling. To gain access to them, we used several methods. First, we referred to FIFA's official source (e.g., http://www.fifa.com/about-fifa/official-documents/index.html), where we obtained the participant names of the first and second edition of FLDP. Then, we utilized professional contacts that are publicly available in each member association; and third, due to the limited contacts among the entire FLDP participant ($N = 69$), we also communicated with relevant personnel in FIFA to request for full contacts. We obtained the full contacts from the gatekeepers after they reviewed our project summary. In doing so, we were able to reach out to other potential participants who missed the initial invitations, including the personnel in FIFA. In addition to the purposive sampling, we embraced a snowball sampling, where earlier participants of the study introduced other possible participants.

Sixteen participants agreed to participate in the study and asked to provided personal information if they were comfortable sharing (see Table 1 for demographics and participant identification). Their occupational roles were varied, including 9 (56%) in the middle- and senior-level management (i.e., chief manager, division director, and women's football

development officer), 5 (31%) in the upper-level management (i.e., board of director, chairperson, and executive committee), and 2 of them (13%) in coaching positions at the national teams. Among participants, 6 work in the continental or international confederations and 10 work in the member associations. The average age of participants was 45.14 (*SD* = 9.43), ranged from 28 to 63 years. The mean of the years of their current occupational role was 6.40 (*SD* = 5.10), ranged from .70 to 18 years, while that of their profession in football governance was 13.43 (*SD* = 7.06), ranged from 4 to 30 years. With regard to the educational backgrounds, 3 obtained a bachelor's degree, 10 obtained masters' degree, 2 completed equivalent diplomas, and the remaining participant did not disclose it. To protect participants' privacy, we report the aggregated data and do not link specific identifying information with the participant description in Table 1.

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3.2 Data Collection

Participants of the study were recruited from the participants of the first and second edition of FLDP (*N* = 69). When contacting and recruiting, we distributed an informed consent form and fully explained the research information and procedures prior to their decision to participate in the study. Of those FLDP participants, 17 participants (25%) were not reached out from the initial contacts due to their occupational status and primary contact change. Hence, among the 52 FLDP participants, 32 participants responded to the earlier contacts (62%), and 26 of them indicated their interest in the study. Finally, because of the difficulties in (re)scheduling the interview, we arranged 16 one-to-one semi-structured interviews. We conducted 11 interviews, including a follow-up interview, with live conversation via a phone call or Skype,

and completed 6 interviews via a written format (i.e. email). The entire interview of the study was conducted from August of 2017 to November of 2017.

Before the IRB processes and initial interviews, a faculty member and three graduate students reviewed the interview questions, and we modified the questions for clarification. Upon the consent, participants received and reviewed a set of the questions before the interview. For a phone or Skype interview, we fully explained the interview protocols when scheduling an appointment and digitally recorded the live conversation only when each participant agreed. The recorded interviews lasted up to 40 minutes, on average, ranged from 25 to 60 minutes, and were transcribed verbatim. In case of technical issues in recording, we took handwritten notes per each interview and included them in the documentation. Further, during the interview, we improvised a few questions and slightly did not follow the sequential order of the interview guide. Considering a social interaction context (Fontana & Frey, 2005), this is not uncommon because a semi-structured interview setting enables researchers to establish rapport with participants. Despite the fact that interview guides were adapted slightly, the aforementioned researchers reviewed all questions, which yields the quality of information (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For a written interview, we applied the same interview procedures. Once participants requested, we attached a Word document into their email and asked them to complete and return it within 10 to 15 days. Return reminders per participant were sent 2 to 3 times every 2 weeks. Follow-ups and clarifying questions also took place via email. All interviews were documented using pseudonyms, and all participants received no financial compensation for their participation.

3.3 Data Analysis

We used a voice recognition software to transcribe all interviews and thoroughly read the transcripts multiple times for accuracy. During and after the interviews, we used a series of

member reflections, where participants were engaged in follow-up interviews, refining relevant themes, and reviewing the final report to create robust dialogues together (Mertens, 1998; Smith & McGannon, 2018). A scholar with research experience outside the study served as a peer debriefer to review aggregated data. This procedure allows for ensuring and discussing the accuracy of the identified themes in the data analysis (Schwandt, 2001). For the data analysis, we also developed a storyline and expanded it before, during, and after the data collection and coding by reading through several sources of available textual data (i.e., FIFA's official documents, transcripts, and interview notes). This process of crosschecking and integrating the document sources into data analysis ensured the precision and consistency of the interpretation. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted, peer debriefing and triangulating enhance the trustworthiness and credibility of the collected data. According to Stake (2005), data can be organized and categorized drawing on the scope of the research questions and case approach. As such, we identified *a priori* codes and labeled at the beginning of data analysis processes. However, even though data collection and data analysis occur simultaneously (Stake, 2005), another set of codes and themes emerged as data analysis progressed. Consequently, we refined *a priori* and emergent codes altogether to generate a categorical aggregation and segments with the data (Stake, 2005). Lastly, although we coded all interviews, data saturation occurred when no new themes or threads emerged from the data (Creswell, 2014).

Furthermore, for a specific elaboration on coding processes, we employed an open, axial, and selective coding (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Cresswell, 2014). In the open coding process, the lead author initially jotted down marginal remarks on a hard copy of each interview transcript. Then, the remarks and entire statement from the verbatim transcripts were carried out on a new format of file for the future quotation. Next, when capturing emerging themes and adding

reflective remarks, the lead author progressed the axial coding for further comparison of the initial codes. Some examples of the open codes included "women's network" and "quality of opportunity" in addition to *a priori* codes, such as "the glass cliff," which ended up as "divergent perceptions of the glass cliff." Other open codes, such as "an increase in women's participation" and "under-representation of women in leadership," grouped together to axial codes, such as "growing number of women in football." Finally, in order to produce an integrated theoretical construct, we included the earlier combined codes with the selective codes, such as "the glass cliff and FIFA's gender initiatives." In the phase of selective coding, when necessary, the lead author asked the participants to edit typographical errors, punctuation, and choice of words for a readability. Throughout data analysis and interpretations, the second author reviewed all themes and statements, as well as provided additional comments to accurately present findings. We adjusted themes until inconsistencies were resolved.

4. Findings and Discussion

We present the findings based on the research questions. All themes, subthemes, and representative quotes are presented in Table 2.

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4.1 The Antecedents of FIFA's Gender Initiatives

In relation to the first research question, we focused on several reasons why FIFA started promoting gender-based initiatives, including the operation of FLDP and placements of women in the upper management. We identified three primary themes: (a) general job availability, (b) growing number of women in football, and (c) social pressure.

4.1.1 General Job Availability

"I think [FIFA's FLDP] is a result that is reflective of the general business market,"

Participant 14 stated. Consistent with this view, a number of participants pointed the

implementation of FLDP to the increase in the labor force participation rate of women in general.

In support of their positions, data from around the world show that women constitute a sizeable

portion of the labor force: 57 percent of the US (https://www.dol.gov/wb/stats/stats_data.htm),

approximately 52 percent in Europe, about 52 percent in Latin America, and roughly 59 percent

in Southeast and East Asia (ILO, 2018).

In addition, some researchers suggested that general labor force participation rate of

women and gender equality issues are closely related to the growth of women's football and their

success in the game (Bredtmann, Crede, & Otten, 2016; Hoffmann, Lee, Matheson, &

Ramasamy, 2006). Considering the multiple legal mandates (e.g., Title IX of the US) and policy

changes (e.g., gender quota in the Union of European Football Association [UEFA]) to increase

the number of women in the sport realm, it is not surprising that women's participation in the

overall workforce is associated with a steady rise of women in upper management positions in

sport organizations. As participant 12 noted, "FIFA spurred the program because they were

aware of that women move upward and they really wanted to get women more opportunities in

administration and decision-making positions," showing that the implementation of FLDP, to

some extent, initiated to develop women's leadership capacity.

4.1.2 Growing Number of Women in Football

Findings of the second theme showed that the overall growth in women's football (i.e.,

elite sport) and the number of women working in football governance have led FIFA to do

something for women. All participants argued that the rate of women in the upper-level roles is

relatively lower than that of men, and thus, warranted greater attention and development. Two

subthemes emerged: (a) an increase in women's participation and (b) under-representation of women in leadership in the football space, and discussed each subtheme as follows.

First, findings suggested that the growth in women's football and the number of women working in football governance drove FIFA to do something for women. Specifically, Participant 10 noted,

Coming of the program, the timing of [the women's leadership development program] gives more pushes with the Women's World Cup that was hosted in 2015 in Canada. Thus, when [FIFA] saw the success of Women's World Cup, that is when [FIFA] has probably thought such as, '[FIFA] has to have more women inclusion,' and that is how [FIFA] ended up putting it on FIFA's agenda.

This finding concertedly supported that the awareness and popularity of women's football have heavily grown up since the successful Women's World Cup (WWC) in 1999 and reached its peak during the recent one in 2015 (FIFA, 2015a). According to FIFA (2014), there are nearly 1.2 million women coaches (6.7% of the entire registered coach), 4.8 million women players registered at an elite-level, and 30 million women participants across member associations worldwide. However, all participants indicated that the growing number of women in the game of football does not guarantee women's occupation in football governance. Indeed, FIFA (2015a) showed that women hold only 8 percent of executive positions in member associations, as compared to the overall growth in women working in football governance. Most importantly, it took FIFA more than two decades (since the first WWC in 1991) to elect women to their leadership ranks and implement diverse gender initiatives to enhance women's leadership in the context of football. Likewise, participants unanimously argued as much that there is a lack of women in leadership space in football. This finding represented that women are under-

represented in decision-making positions in football governance and indicated that gender-related actions were designed to fill this gap (FIFA, 2014).

In addition, a number of participants in the study noted that the alternative goal of women's leadership development program was to balance a gender disparity in the leadership positions between men and women, to a certain degree. Participant 8 specifically articulated that, "[S]occer was culturally viewed as a profession only for men" and thus "[t]he socio-cultural barrier does not see women in a profession traditionally dominated by men." She further noted, although she received support for her projects, "women's ideas and knowledge are not valued in the same way that are valued the ideas of men who are in the same position, but were placed second after men's projects" (personal communication, September 7, 2017). In the coaching context, several participants also mentioned that women undertake mostly women's teams, but they hold peripheral roles in women's teams if head coaches are men. Similar to this finding, Adriaanse (2016) argued that the increasing participation of women in sport does not guarantee that women have upward mobility in sport work environments. Further, researchers contended that despite the increase in women's representation in leadership roles, men's networking circles continue to play a large role in keeping power and privilege within sport organizations (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008; Cunningham, 2008; Shaw & Frisby, 2006).

4.1.3 Social Pressure

Finally, in recognizing the overarching reasons for the execution of gender initiatives, some participants acknowledged that the presence of the development program was feasible because of the efforts of a few individuals on the front line (e.g., Moya Dodd). According to Participant 16, "there were very few administrators and team members from inside and outside FIFA to support and deliver [FLDP] programs, especially when the task force team brought up

the idea, but they worked together to develop women's football and take initiatives of women's leadership in football" (personal communication, October 6, 2017). The media often advocated for such assertions as well (Fagan, 2014; McGregor, 2015), creating social pressure through the combination of individual acts and social movements. To be specific, Participant 13 stated,

> There is a worldwide movement to involve women and a social appeal around the role of women in terms of how women contribute more to the football system. FIFA is a big institution, a strong brand, which cannot be out of such kinds of change.

> In turn, such progressive voices in and out of FIFA actually brought the women's

leadership development program to the surface. Given that such individual efforts and passion for women in football by internal and external stakeholders raised social pressure and public awareness through the media, findings demonstrated that social pressure overwhelmingly resulted in the execution of the program. This supported the contention of Cunningham (2008) that social pressure challenges historically institutionalized norms and practices in sport organizations.

Considering that the implementation of the program and other gender-related actions occurred during FIFA's reforming processes; however, a follow-up question asked whether FIFA's recent corruption influenced their unprecedented gender equality actions, including appointments of women to leadership. When asked, Participant 11 commented:

> I think that after [FIFA] crisis, it was necessary to look for interest groups like the women, fans, and another population. There was a social tension about the future of the institution [like] FIFA and [FLDP] was an opportunity to change the institutional goals.

This statement implied a possibility of a glass cliff phenomenon in the context of football, which we described in more detail in the next dimension.

Collectively, findings related to the first research question illustrated that FIFA started

the women's leadership development program due to the growing number of women in a wide

range of positions in the general workforce as well as the game of football worldwide. Despite

the growing number of women in football, however, women in leadership positions in football

governance were relatively rarer than men. Hence, our findings supported the claims from earlier

studies that women are disproportionally marginalized in leadership positions within the context

of sport (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Cunningham, 2008; Shaw & Frisby, 2006; Walker & Bopp,

2011).

4.2 The Glass Cliff and FIFA's Gender Initiatives

Our second research question focused on the linkage between the glass cliff phenomenon

and FIFA's recent gender diversity initiatives in times of crisis. We identified the glass cliff and

FIFA's gender initiatives as an overarching dimension, coupled with the two main themes: (a)

divergent perceptions of the glass cliff and (b) the gender bias in football.

4.2.1 Divergent Perceptions of the Glass Cliff

To discuss the second research question, we sorted three subthemes of the glass cliff as:

(a) perception of the glass cliff, (b) enduring crisis, and (c) leadership characteristics for

precarious situations. We delineated each of the subthemes as follows.

First, findings showed the divergent perceptions of the glass cliff. While we found a

relatively unclear connection between the inauguration of women's leadership development

program and crisis, when asked, most participants noted that gender equality actions, such as

appointments of women to the upper-level positions, helped FIFA manage their reputation and

image. As explained by Participant 1,

You know what, you are right. It is a little bit difficult to really know what FIFA is trying

to do. I do not have credit for, it is only with hoping that, FIFA has just recently gone

through reform and clearly [FIFA] wants to make difference in their hiring processes. I

mean, that is the vision that [FIFA] wants.

Similarly, Participant 4 noted,

Yes, it really helps. Female leadership at FIFA might help to develop their image and

reputation rebuilding, because you see, female leadership is growing in member

associations, and [female leaders] are fighting against corruption. That is what I have in

my assumption. Yes, this explains the question, because FIFA helped [FIFA Secretary

General], it helps gender discrimination.

Consistent with earlier evidence (Boudreaux et al., 2016; Edward, 2016; Glass, 2016),

findings demonstrated that people may believe in a symbolized metaphor for women and

equality. This finding particularly supported the glass cliff notion (Ryan & Haslam, 2005, 2007)

and showed that FIFA was associated with rebuilding their image after the latest financial

scandal and restoring some integrity through the new administration and appointing women to

leadership. Several researchers found that sport organizations with issues of corruption often

manage external evaluation to protect their image and recover from the loss of trust (Ibrahim,

2017; Kihl et al., 2017; Mason et al., 2016). In support of earlier work on the glass cliff, this

finding echoes Bruckmüller and Branscombe's (2010) study that women are more likely than

men to be elected to lead poorly performing organizations largely for their gendered leadership

qualities (e.g., conflict-solving). Further, Kulich and colleagues (2015) suggested that

organizations in times of crisis tend to publicize an appointment of women with the feminine

leadership qualities in order to signal their organizational change and reform. Also, Elsaid and

Ursel (2017) showed that these organizations attempt to not only hire women as leaders but allow them to secure the position for long due to the fear of negative publicity. Finally, as Bruckmüller and colleagues (2014) noted, an organizational preference for women leaders for contextual reasons remains an important issue because differential attitudes about gender and leadership can be harmful for an individual's career trajectory and create the glass cliff.

By contrast, few participants of the study disagreed with the linkage between the glass cliff with the operation of FIFA's women's leadership development program. For example, Participant 14 counterargued,

> I believe that [FIFA], from what I know, [*sic*] actually started the development of [FLDP] a long before the corruption issues and scandal happened to FIFA. So, I do not think that there is a linkage since I think the timing, the timing of the program was incidental in that regard.

Consistent with this view, those who debunked the glass cliff assumption emphasized that FIFA's women's leadership development program was not completely associated with the crisis. Rather, these participants denied the juxtaposition of the operation of the program with appointments of women to FIFA's leadership ranks. They strongly argued that those initiatives were entirely two different contexts concerning FIFA's gender-related actions. To be specific, these participants pointed out that FLDP was one of the final products, including "Live Your Goals," among the long-run developmental programs for the growth in women's football worldwide that were ignited from Joseph Blatter's leadership and even before.

Considering when and how many corruptions Blatter and his circles have engaged in, however, participants who were unwilling to support the glass cliff assumption associated FIFA's gender initiatives with organizational and strategic responses to their crisis. In other

words, they claimed the glass cliff to some extent, consistent with Boudreaux and colleagues' (2016) contention, with regard to FIFA's historic appointments of women to leadership. The contradiction was made because these participants were involved in the decision to implement FLDP and were already aware of the underlying assumptions of the glass cliff with FIFA's crisis, as well as vantage points of gender diversity practices on boards. Thus, in terms of corruption, Participant 15 overturned the response:

Once FIFA's corruption came out, I am not saying once you hear, but [FIFA] is still scared that they need to correct them. It has been hard time for FIFA due to the corruption, so [FIFA] is still taking care of their reputation.

This argument similarly aligns with the contention of Bruckmüller and colleagues (2014) that women leaders are stereotypically expected to reduce damage of organizations and minimize conflicts in times of crisis. In consequence of FIFA's historical assignments of women leaders, Participant 13 mentioned that there is a high chance that other countries, units, and confederations or member associations will start to follow how FIFA has done—that is, having more women in leadership roles under declining situations. Thus, as Mulcahy and Linehan (2014) analyzed situational factors, examining when and why women are appointed to leadership is critical in understanding the glass cliff effect, as women leaders are exceptionally few in football governance.

As a whole, findings of the glass cliff effect were perplexing, especially regarding FIFA's efforts around women's leadership development. As participants displayed high levels of concerns for the sustainability of the women's leadership development program and long tenure of incumbent women leaders in FIFA, further investigation is certainly warranted to explore a possible connection between FIFA's gender initiatives and its consequences on an automatic

gender stereotyping in leadership in sport organizations in a state of crisis (Bruckmüller &

Branscombe, 2010; Ryan et al., 2016).

The second subtheme of the glass cliff phenomenon emerged as an enduring crisis.

Findings demonstrated that when women were appointed to the decision-making roles during

FIFA's reforming processes, people observed how these women leaders perform and react

(Edwards, 2016). This argument warrants that women, who are currently working in the top-

level positions or going to work for organizations under the downturn circumstances, need to

realize the challenges and relation of power inside and outside of each organization. According

to Bruckmüller and Branscombe (2010), leaders in declining organizations are likely to

encounter individual blames and interpersonal conflicts instead of their organizations taking

responsibility for the failure to achieve outstanding performance in the past. Moreover, Ryan and

colleagues (2011) asserted that women in the glass cliff positions might receive less support and

resources to sustain their leadership, as compared to men, due to the invisible sexism and in-

group favoritism within organizations. Therefore, findings regarding enduring crisis described

that women working for poorly performing organizations might face situations, where they make

tough decisions and implement instant changes without supportive networks and resources. Most

importantly, these leaders might be criticized for the consequences or poor performance that

occurred prior to their appointments (Ryan et al., 2016).

Finally, all participants were asked what types of leadership are essential for leaders in

precarious situations, as contextual variations greatly attribute to the glass cliff effect. While

participants did not reach a consensus on a specific leadership quality for risky situations, they

suggested different leadership characteristics. In fact, almost all of them emphasized that those

characteristics in risky positions do not matter in terms of gender. For example, Participant 15

stated that, "The leadership characteristics should be the same regardless of gender." Some other participants similarly contended that, "[Leadership characteristics in the risky positions] is not matter of gender." Participant 14 even highlighted that, "I mean, I think that [women] should show the same characteristics that men in [precarious] positions have…I do not think that you need 'women.'" These findings are noteworthy to show that desirable leadership characteristics for poorly performing organizations are gender-neutral, specifically echoing Ryan and colleagues' (2011) assertion that both communal and agentic leadership characteristics play a vital role when organizations undergo a crisis.

In response to the aforementioned leadership characteristics in precarious positions, Participant 7 revealed that, "Knowledge of rules and regulations of football, statutes of FIFA, experience in football, honesty, transparency, and accountability" are required leadership characteristics for the risky positions in football governance. We found that these characteristics, regardless of gender of a leader, were the most frequently mentioned from participants and categorized representatives as the followings: (a) authenticity grouped with integrity and trustworthiness; (b) interpersonal skills, such as active communication, flexibility, and inclusiveness; (c) and managerial skills, such as emotional control, creativity, innovation, resourcefulness, visionary, discipline, and firmness. Overall, findings of the first theme expounded on participants' divergent perceptions on the glass cliff phenomenon in football, processes of an enduring crisis, and desirable leadership characteristics for poorly performing organizations.

4.2.2 Gender Bias in Football

Moving onto the second theme, we found some emerging themes that were not directly related to the research question but possible indicators discussed in the glass cliff literature.

Thus, we explored findings of women leaders' experiences and coalesced into two subthemes: (a) sociocultural context, such as women's network and quality of opportunity in the football space, and (b) individual context containing self-ability. We captured these subthemes as the interviews progressed and encouraged participants to bring up the gender-related issues in football governance. Because a glass cliff effect is derived from various contexts within individual and structural mechanisms, we asked a couple of follow-up questions such as, "What are daily challenges or opportunities for women in football governance, and how those impacted you?"

First, findings of the sociocultural context indicated that there are several gender biases in football. Aside from the earlier unanimous consent on the growth of women in football, all participants agreed that football is very strongly rooted in the men-centered domain. For example, Participant 15 underlined, "Football is all politics and [politics] have been a huge barrier" for women leaders. This argument is congruent with, Shaw and Hoeber (2003), who reported that women leaders in sport often have insufficient resources and are excluded from necessary networks to conduct meaningful projects. In the glass cliff context, when such support is absent, women leaders are unlikely to make important decisions while struggling with peripheral roles in leadership (Ryan & Haslam, 2007). Considering most decision-makers in football are men, in-group favoritism would play a fundamental role in protecting their fellow members while opening up a risky position to outgroup members—women (Bruckmüller and colleagues). Furthermore, women exhibiting feminine leadership characteristics, such as warmth and consideration, are typically not valued in sport organizations and thus women with such characteristics are often seen as incompetent as leaders (Burton et al., 2009). However, Kulich and colleagues (2015) asserted that organizations in a crisis might desirably seek for leaders with

communal characteristics. As such, women who display masculine leadership characteristics

may be evaluated unfavorably and not be promoted to the precarious positions in football. This

glass cliff scenario, in turn, does not minimize but exacerbate gender bias in leadership.

Therefore, despite the increasing number of women in leadership in sport settings, researchers

should investigate the quantity of men and women in upper management as well as the quality of

those positions, including roles and experiences.

Moreover, we observed different gender bias and influence in football, specifically

through cultural differences across organizations and nations. Findings demonstrated that the

degree of gender equity and participants' job duties in member associations are not equivalent

with the ones in FIFA or other continental confederations. For instance, according to Participant

11, "FIFA is looking for a gender equality but [member associations] are looking for own

interest and goals." In light of this view, Participant 15 expanded that,

> Generally saying, in the world's football, is there a huge gender influence? Yes, [gender
>
> influence] really depends on which demographic situation you live in, then there is a
>
> huge difference in gender. Challenges are very different from countries to countries or
>
> member associations to member associations.

Because sociocultural boundaries vary across organizations and countries, findings

suggested that gender-related initiatives in football might be achieved differently under their

unique circumstance. Referring to FIFA's gender-based initiatives, numerous member

associations and confederations have intended to promote gender equality through specialized

leadership trainings (e.g., UEFA's women-focused program), mentoring, and gender quota for

women in the upper-level positions. However, findings indicated that such gender policies are

socially and culturally contextual even though participants have worked in the same football

environment. As an example, some participants mentioned that football associations in Africa do not appoint women as leaders at all because of overt and subtle sexism. Thus, women working in member associations, where there are lower chances of upward trajectory and embedded gender stereotypes, might accept more glass cliff positions than those in FIFA or other confederations.

In a similar way, we found another structural gendered trend that women are usually designated to work with regard to women's football while men work for both. In particular, Participant 14 demonstrated,

> I would say most [women], everyone came from member associations, most of them would focus on women's football specifically, while the people from the FIFA do not only work for women's football, but work for football in general.

Adding to this point, Participant 4 stated, "There could be different types of gender discrimination, which are visible and invisible…But, the biggest problem is that many men do not want women to lead the projects." This finding echoes with think manager–think male association that there is a societal expectation of "what women should do and men are supposed to do" in professional settings (Schein, 2001). Arguably, such sociocultural pushbacks imply a situation in which women are expected to hold certain types of gendered leadership characteristics, thereby endorsing gender-role stereotyping in leadership and evaluation bias (Acar & Sümer, 2018; Powell, 2018).

Lastly, as Ryan and Haslam (2007) noted, the glass cliff emerges as a mixture of both individual and structural barriers and challenges. While researchers have accumulated evidence of structural mechanisms involved in the glass cliff, a glass cliff appointment is daunting and detrimental for women in terms of individuals' career advancement and success. In this regard, findings of individual context showed that participants have independently experienced diverse

sociocultural, political, and economic discriminations in football. They concertedly argued that there is unfair distributive power between men and women, leading to women's slower promotions and lower compensations, compared to men. A recent example of chants of equal pay after the 2019 Women's World Cup final and during the victory parade of the US national team highlights unequal treatments and rewards between men and women in football. By contrast, a certain number of participants who have considerable organizational support commented that they have not experienced relevant sexism while acknowledging that general gender bias exists in football governance. This finding indicated that every woman leader might not necessarily receive a perilous leadership offer. For example, as Brown and colleagues noted (2011), women whose characteristics are aggressive and opportunistic might not be considered as a potential leader in struggling organizations, but the opposite is true: women who signal symbolical changes and exhibit passive leadership capabilities are preferred for leadership roles (Kulich et al., 2015). However, without organizational support, gender equitable policies, and coworkers and supervisors' encouragements, women cannot individually avoid situational constraints that lead to career failure (Ryan et al., 2014). Most significantly, although handling with potential risks in new leadership roles is not confined to a glass cliff position, our findings explained that implementing changes solely relying upon their individual ability and performances might be detrimental for individuals' careers.

5. Conclusion and Implications

By anchoring the notion of the glass cliff (Ryan & Haslam, 2005, 2007), we explored the reasons why FIFA initiated gender-related actions and whether the implementation of FLDP and historic appointments of women to leadership positions were linked to FIFA's recent corruption. Importantly, we found a discrepancy on the perceptions of the glass cliff. While FIFA planned to

implement FLDP prior to their scandal in 2015, considering their assignments of women in leadership roles that occurred during their reforming processes (FIFA, 2015b, 2015c), FIFA's recent gender-based actions in times of crisis were viewed as their rebuilding image and reputation. Since such leadership offers for women are seen exceptional in the football domain, and FIFA is no longer implementing FLDP after the second edition in 2018, FIFA's gender-based initiatives are closely related to the glass cliff phenomenon. Yet, our case study did not offer the robust evidence of the glass cliff in the context of sport due to the lack of direct interview from decision-makers. Therefore, a further exploration of the evidence from the actual decision makers using in-depth ethnographic studies would be useful to provide insight into the glass cliff literature in the sport context.

Coupled with the aforementioned conclusions, we highlight a number of theoretical and practical implications. For theoretical implications, we call for further investigation, especially on FIFA's gender-related actions and its impacts to other sport organizations in relation to their contextual factors, thereby greatly increasing the understanding of why and when the glass cliff occurs. Yet, sport is one of the men-centered fields, where gender bias and discriminatory organizational practices continue to emerge for men's power dynamics (Cunningham, 2008). Thus, there is still much work to illustrate not only why and when the glass cliff emerges, but also how dominant groups address the think crisis–think female framework. Further, researchers should consider nontraditional leaders in research focusing on their lack of networks and quality of leadership offers in times of organizational crisis. As Cook and Glass (2013) suggested, researchers have little evidence of whether nontraditional leaders, including women and racial/ethnic minorities, face the glass cliff in sport, with a few exceptions (e.g., Wicker et al., 2019). These studies showed that teams with a history of losses placed minorities as head

coaches to lead their declining performances. Thus, researchers can consider adopting the glass cliff with minority coaches or personnel in various sport teams or units.

In addition, leadership styles are not binary between men and women or masculine and feminine, nor confined to any certain groups of people and particular levels in organizational settings. As a result, the negative outcomes of gender binary may paradoxically strengthen gendered expectations of leadership at work if organizations place women to the leadership roles when organizations are in times of crisis only, compared to the times of prosperous (Ryan et al., 2010). In a similar vein, researchers would anticipate that decision makers will prefer candidates who are stereotypical male, White, and straight rather than other candidates from minority groups. Lastly, longitudinal study of career trajectories of the program participants would be helpful to determine whether the program participants receive leadership opportunities and achieve their career success within 3-5 years after the completion of the program.

From a practical angle, our findings warrant gender-role stereotyping in leadership and evaluation bias in the relationship between FIFA's crisis and their gender-based initiatives, especially through unprecedented appointments of women to FIFA's leadership ranks. Given that most sport governing bodies, such as IOC or UEFA, have carried out similar gender equality initiatives, decision-makers should be cognizant of potential consequences of gendered policies that they would offer for women in times of downturn. Doing so will likely influence the appropriate development and implementation of gender-related actions while identifying ways to reduce gender bias during the times of crisis. Otherwise, decision-makers might run the risk of reinforcing the notion of think crisis–think female when simply referring to FIFA's gender action with feminine aspects of leadership. Particularly, further research should identify willingness of key decision-makers of other sport organizations besides FIFA and their member associations to

proactively promote inclusiveness and gender diversity initiatives (e.g., establishment of diversity program and recruitment of diverse board members) within their organizations.

Finally, while FIFA's gender-based initiatives might play an important role in not only deepening nontraditional leaders' competencies and knowledge in football governance, board seats are limited. In particular, women and other minority administrators or coaches are likely under pressure to accept a glass cliff offer due to a low rate of upward mobility (Bruckmüller & Branscombe, 2010). Thus, though it seems promising for both individuals and organizations, nontraditional leaders must be aware of the glass cliff appointments and power dynamics to minimize parallel predictions for think crisis–think female.

5.1. Limitations and Future Recommendations

With the support of the literature on the glass cliff (2005, 2007), we present some limitations that might influence the generalization of our findings and researchers may consider improvements for future inquiry. We warrant three areas in the context of sport. First, we drew conclusions based on a cross-sectional study. Although the depth and richness of the qualitative data in the study provided fruitful discussions of participants, who are actively working in either administrative and coaching positions in football governance, findings from a certain number of the program participants might not have fully addressed perspectives from other women leaders or marginalized groups in the football domain. For example, our findings presented inconclusive views of glass cliff and gendered experiences, which was suggested in the previous studies that inconsistent results remain unanswered (Ryan et al., 2016). Bechtoldt and colleagues (2019) also did not support the glass cliff assumptions in their analysis of corporate performance data. However, these inconclusive findings do not indicate that the glass cliff does not exist in sport settings, as we examined the perceptions of the program participants instead of those who were

actually engaged in the decision-making of hiring women leaders in FIFA. Thus, while responses of women leaders could be similar across the football domain, researchers might observe different patterns in their empirical work, largely depending on participants' occupational roles and affiliated organizations (i.e., national-, continental-, and international-levels). As we noted earlier, longitudinal studies can also help discover the glass cliff effect in football governance and the effectiveness of the leadership developmental program.

Similarly, our findings showed a trend, where women leaders mainly work for women's football or undertake a peripheral role in football governance, in particular in member associations, while men hold key decision-making positions in both women's and men's football. However, we did not discuss how this sex segregation in sport would come into play to establish the glass cliff effect. Instead, we explained a variety of gender-role stereotyping and biases (e.g., dominant leadership of men) that might influence the creation of the glass cliff in football governance. For instance, although promotions to head coaches are higher in men's football than those are in women's football, women leaders might not receive such offers in a men's team with a history of poor records. On the contrary, men might be more frequently than women to be appointed in the glass cliff positions in both teams. Therefore, another level of analysis based on sex segregation in sport might influence the contribution to the current study.

Finally, although Crowe and colleagues (2011) argued that a case study approach is helpful for researchers to answer "why" and "how" questions, the interpretation and discussions are subject to researchers' standpoints or methodological and theoretical considerations. Thus, we combined various sources of documents and interview data altogether to triangulate and crosscheck our findings. Given the little evidence of whether women in sport work environments

would encounter the glass cliff, researchers should undertake further investigations to expand this study to explore the same phenomenon in various sport settings.

5.2. Summary

In summary, we illuminated the second dimension with respect to the relationship between FIFA's gender-based actions and their crisis. Findings revealed that although the linkage of the commencement of FLDP and FIFA's scandal was relatively unclear and less connected than the initial assumption of this study, we observed that FIFA's appointments of women to leadership ranks during their reforming processes might have led to a stronger gender-role stereotyping in leadership and evaluation bias in the football context. As Ryan and Haslam (2007) noted, the glass cliff phenomenon is a consequence of various gender-relevant stereotypes and biases from individual and sociocultural mechanisms. With the increasing number of women working in football governance, we therefore urge women leaders to understand when, why, and how the glass cliff appointments are likely to occur.

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APPENDIX 1

Interview Questions

Number	Interview Questions
1	Why do participants think FIFA started the leadership development
2	program?
3	Why do participants think FIFA targeted women in this process?
	Why do participants think FIFA did not previously prioritize women in
4	leadership development?
5	What did the training consist of?
6	Did gender play a role in the content of the training?
7	What did participants learn from the training?
	What have been the career outcomes of participants?

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[i] According to the International Labour Organization (2018), gender equality refers to equal allocation of rights, responsibilities, benefits, resources, and opportunities that all people are treated in the same way while gender quality can be understood in diverse ways in sport (Shaw & Frisby, 2006). For example, girls and women are regarded the same as boys and men; in turn, they should be treated equally. On another note, gender equity indicates fair treatments for women and men based on their respective needs. In most instances, gender equity might not include equality to practices using a liberal feminist perspective, but perceptions of fairness. As such, gender equity is considered equivalent treatment in terms of the allocation of rights and resources. Despite its important distinction between these two concepts gender equality and gender equity, however, the meanings are not clearly articulated in practice and thus lead to complex understandings of the terms. In this paper, we question the institutionalized gender inequality. Here we do not mean that women and men leaders to become the same, but the resource allocation.

[ii] FIFA's gender initiatives in leadership can be traced back to their appointment of the first woman in the history of FIFA, Lydia Nsekera, to its 25-member executive committee in 2013. Ever since then, FIFA elected three women, including Lydia Nsekera, to the executive committees, and Moya Dodd, one of these members, committed herself to put extensive efforts to improve gender balance in football. As a result, FIFA formed a task force, chaired by Moya Dodd, to identify key areas and create detailed plans for women's football during the presidency of Sepp Blatter in 2014. As part of the efforts carried out by the task force, FIFA launched a nine-month female leadership development programme (FLDP) in May 2015. The FLDP aims to enhance gender diversity and inclusive decision-making practices while increasing the number of women leaders. In doing so, FIFA can convert such diversity initiatives into tangible benefits for women's football and eventually change leadership dynamics in football. After implementing the first edition of the FLDP, FIFA appointed two women in the positions of secretary-general and chief women's football in 2016. Because Moya Dodd and few colleagues from inside and outside FIFA have done a great deal of work to promote equitable leadership opportunities for women in football, FIFA has held a series of annual conferences and workshops for the development of women's football, as well as support for women in football governance.

[iii] While the terms sex and gender are often used interchangeably, there are distinctions between sex and gender. According to Powell (2018), sex is related to anatomical structure, referring to one's biological categories and physical characteristics that, in most cases, define women and men, as well as living organisms. The term gender, which has generally been used as a synonym for sex for the past decades, is related to an imposed sociocultural and psychological conditions for the biological categories of sex. The discourses surrounding gender is particularly associated with the socially constructed roles, attitudes, and behaviors of and between groups of men and women. For example, participation in sport and physical activities is perceived as inappropriate for girls and women and includes few activities such as dancing and gymnastics viewed as primarily for girls and women, if at all (Cunningham, 2019). As such, gender stereotypes and roles are closely associated with a particular sex and sport— with being masculine, feminine, or neutral (Burton et al., 2009). More recently, researchers have expanded the definition of gender and sex beyond the binary, arguing that gender can be fluid and multifaceted (Halberstam, 2012). In this case, people can challenge the restrictive views of gender to express diverse social meanings and expectations. While we recognize that gender can be seen as a spectrum, in this article, we indicate the term gender as the idea of how boys and girls or men and women are expected to behave at work. In doing so, we are able to

discuss traditional gender role expectations associated with those behaviors adopted overtly or covertly by societal conditions.